

#612

LETTER

TO A MEMBER OF THE

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,

IN REPLY TO OBJECTIONS AGAINST JOINING

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETIES.

By WILLIAM BASSETT.

The cause which I knew not I searched out.—JOB.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.—PAUL.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following letter was written in reply to one recently received from a Friend, containing the following objections against members of the Society of Friends joining Anti-Slavery Societies, viz.:—

That the fact of Friends at the North having joined anti-slavery societies, has seriously *affected the influence* of Friends at the South.

That, in Virginia, the Society of Friends has long been held in the *highest estimation*, both by those in authority and by the citizens generally ;—it having been admitted by them that *Friends* in opposing slavery, were actuated by *religious motives*.

That the *motives* of ‘ Friends ’ have been *respected* and their appeals listened to with attention, and with *effect*; in evidence of which, we are referred to the Virginia Convention, and to the tone of feeling there manifested, *so favorable to the abolition cause*, in reference to which, the writer says, ‘ This was a good work,—what did hinder it ? ’

That Anti-Slavery Societies have *not* obtained credit

for the same motives,—slave-holders appearing to believe that in such societies, *ambition and political influence* are the main-springs of action; and that, of course, a distrust of these societies is the consequence. Still, it is admitted that one great reason for this distrust, on the part of the slave-holder, is *love for his own interest*, and consequent *dislike of all that seems to oppose it*. But, the writer is of the opinion that there must be other reasons, *because*, he says, while Friends and anti-slavery societies have *both* labored professedly to abolish slavery; the one has obtained credit for sincerity of motive, and the other has not. The writer thinks that *we* can sufficiently account for the different estimation of them to determine *our* duty.

That 'Friends' are known to be a religious society, and *opposed to all violence*, and 'to act up to their creed, that the end does *not* sanctify the means;' while, on the other hand, the anti-slavery society is not a religious association, and *the absence of religion, is no disqualification for membership*.

That, therefore, we cannot wonder that fears are entertained at the South as to the *means* to be resorted to.

That, as 'Friends,' we cannot hope, nor even wish, to abolish slavery by *means inconsistent with our profession*,—that 'the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.'

That the only way to act availingly, is on the *reason and conscience* of the oppressor. Hence the importance of having *access* to it. That it is a serious thing to shut the only door by which we can reach the slaveholder or liberate the slave.

That, although it may be said that this is the doctrine of expediency, and that we must do right and leave consequences, we are reminded that 'right consequences follow right actions,' as invariably as an effect follows its cause.

As similar objections are so frequently made, some of the writer's friends, believing that a public notice of them is required, have solicited him to submit his reply to the press; to which he has been induced to consent, from a hope that it may be a means of bringing some of his fellow members, who differ with him in sentiment on this subject, to a more careful and candid consideration of it.

LETTER.

DEAR FRIEND:

THY letter came duly to hand, and having endeavored to give thy objections against joining anti-slavery societies, due consideration, I now proceed to give thee my views in relation to them.

It is said, in the first place, that *Friends at the North having joined anti-slavery societies, has seriously affected the influence of Friends at the South.*

Why should any such effect be produced on the minds of *those who really wish for the abolition of slavery*, but from a misconception of the objects and principles of the abolitionists? Surely, if such as these were correctly informed of the real feelings of those who have espoused the anti-slavery cause, they would hail their efforts with joy; and, so far from esteeming Friends *the less* for joining the anti-slavery societies, they would but consider it as an additional proof of their sincere attachment to those principles of liberty which they had professed, and of their readiness to avail themselves of so favorable an opportunity to aid in carrying out those principles into practice.

But, that such an effect *should* be produced on those who know what the real objects and principles of the Abolitionists are, and who are well aware, too, that the

measures by which they are seeking to give effect to their principles, possess a powerful energy, and carry with them a potency, terrible indeed to those whose happiness consists in the indulgence of the love and lust of power, but who, nevertheless, are determined, at all hazards, to fortify themselves in the continuance of their wickedness, there can be no wonder. Well may they tremble when they see indications of the Society of Friends throwing the weight of its influence in favor of a cause, the success of which they so much dread.

It may be well to inquire,—what are those principles and objects, the promulgation of which has caused such a degree of consternation at the South, and which has so exasperated the enemies of human freedom at the North? and to consider whether the Society of Friends has ever openly and explicitly avowed them.

The principles and objects of the Abolitionists may be ascertained by the following extracts from the Constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society :

‘ Art. 2. The objects of this Society are the entire abolition of slavery in the United States. While it admits that each state, in which slavery exists, has, by the Constitution of the United States, the exclusive right to legislate in regard to its abolition in that State, it shall aim to convince all our fellow-citizens by arguments addressed to their *understandings and consciences*, that slaveholding is a heinous crime in the sight of God ; and that the duty, safety, and best interests of all concerned, require its *immediate abandonment, without expatriation*. The Society will also endeavor in a constitutional way to influence Congress to put an end to the domestic Slave-trade, and to abolish slavery in all those portions of our

common country, which come under its control, especially in the District of Columbia, and likewise to prevent the extension of it to any state that may hereafter be admitted to the Union.

Art. 3. This Society shall aim to *elevate the character and condition of the people of color*, by encouraging their intellectual, moral and religious improvement, and by removing public prejudice; that thus they may, according to their intellectual and moral worth, share an *equality with the whites* of civil and religious privileges; but the society will never, in any way, countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights, by resorting to physical force.

Art. 4. Any person *who consents to the principles* of this Constitution, who contributes to the funds of this Society, and is not a slaveholder, may be a member of this Society, and shall be entitled to vote at its meetings.'

These are the principles, the advocacy of which has struck such horror to the hearts of those who make merchandise of men, and which are calculated, not merely to lop off the branches of the corrupt tree, but to overthrow and utterly destroy it, root and branch. Slaveholders know it, and how, then, can we expect to secure their respect without the sacrifice of these principles? And shall we purchase their respect *at such a price*? But what avails *abstract principles*, and how can I carry these principles into practical operation but through the medium of the anti-slavery societies? Not, surely, by means of the Society of Friends in its present condition. For, I contend that this Society has never avowed these principles to their full extent; and no one, I presume, will take the ground that our Society has adopted the *measures* of the Abolitionists, which have been so unsparingly de-

nounced, not only by the advocates of slavery, but by those who are *opposed to slavery in the abstract*. But, what are their measures? They are these—

They will exercise the right guaranteed to them by the Constitution, to petition Congress for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the Territories. They will use the right of speech and of the press, and will address arguments to the *understandings and consciences* of their fellow citizens, and endeavor to convince them of the duty of immediate emancipation. They will endeavor to secure to the colored people an equality of civil and religious privileges, by encouraging their moral and religious improvement, *and the removal of existing prejudices against them*.

Such, then, are the principles and measures of the Abolitionists; and if it be found that they have never been fully acknowledged and adopted by the Society of Friends, as I shall more fully make appear hereafter, may not this, together with the prevailing misconceptions of the designs of the Abolitionists, furnish sufficient reasons why Friends should have been more respected at the South than the Abolitionists?

No marvel that such doctrines and measures are unpalatable to the slaveholder. His condition may be compared to that of a wounded man, whose medical attendant dresses his wound with applications of a mild and soothing nature, pretty well adapted to wounds of an ordinary character, but not possessing sufficient virtue to effect a cure in a case like this. A surgeon of greater skill, seeing the alarming situation of his neighbor, and knowing that, unless effectual means be forthwith resorted to, a fatal result must ensue, boldly and skilfully applies the *knife* to remove the putrid parts, as the only means of effecting a

cure, and preserving the life of his patient. But, no sooner does the knife of the operator reach to the *quick*, than the wounded man cries out at the top of his voice—*murder—murder*—and would fain have the surgeon indicted for an attempt on his life; but as no law exists which can be brought to bear on the case, he resolves to consign him to the tender mercies of *lynch law*, the first time an opportunity offers. The benevolent surgeon, finding himself in this dilemma, and feeling anxious to do all in his power for his almost dying neighbor, calls on his former attendant, who still retains the respect of his suffering friend, to consult with him on the best means of affording relief. He is repulsed with the reply—‘Why, I am aware that our friend is in a very critical situation, and that at a *proper time* it may be necessary to apply the knife, but at present he is *too much excited*, and I think it will be *most expedient* to defer the operation—and, although I freely acknowledge that it would be best for him to submit to thy mode of treatment, still, I dare not tell him so, for fear of *affecting my influence*. I prefer keeping along in my own way.’ What should we think of such kindness?

The truth of the matter is, that, when the action on the subject of abolition was mostly confined to an *occasional* appeal or memorial from the Society of Friends, it was considered rather as a *matter of course*, and while it *extended no farther*, the slaveholder felt that he had nothing to fear. He might give them a compliment on their *good intentions*, and pass it by unheeded. The old bastille of slavery stood so firm, and its foundations were laid so deep, that its defenders had no cause for alarm from an occasional *rill* of disapprobation trickling against it. But, when they hear the thunders of popular indignation roll-

ing in the moral atmosphere—when they see the waves of an enlightened public sentiment rushing onward, and threatening to sweep away from foundation to top-stone, the towering walls of their time-worn citadel, they know full well the danger of their situation, and that they shall not be able to withstand the shock. Senator Preston, of South Carolina, in a speech in Congress, in the session of 1835—6, in reference to the *petitions* for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, said—‘They (the petitions) do not come as heretofore, *singly, and far apart*; from the quiet *routine* of the Society of Friends, or the obscure vanity of some philanthropic club, but they are sent to us in *vast numbers* from soured and agitated communities; poured in upon us from the OVERFLOWING OF PUBLIC SENTIMENT, which, every where, in all western Europe and eastern America, has been lashed into excitement on this subject. The bosom of society heaves with new and violent emotions.’

The objection leads, after all, to the inquiry, whether it is right to be governed in our actions by a desire *to retain the favorable regard of wicked men*. Was Moses so actuated, when, in obedience to the Divine command, he called upon Pharaoh to liberate the children of Israel from their cruel bondage? Might he not have reasoned, and would he not, if he had been actuated by this world's policy, that it was useless for him to repeat the divine message, because it only had the effect to harden the heart of the royal slaveholder, and, in persisting, he should only *lose his influence*? Thinkest thou that the Prophets of old sought the *respect* of the people, when they foretold the awful judgments of an offended God on their rebellious nation? Were the *motives* of our blessed Lord *respected* by the Jews, when they accused him of blasphemy

and spit upon him, and buffeted him, and finally put him to an ignominious death? Did they manifest their respect for the motives of Peter and John when they ‘commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus?’ And did those devoted men seek the praise of men when they replied—‘Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye?’ Did the sainted martyr Stephen consider how he might retain his influence with the people, when he charged them with being the betrayers and murderers of the Just One? Was Paul *respected* by the Jews when they went about to kill him? Or, dost thou think that the early founders of our Society were influenced by a desire to obtain the good opinions of men? Was not the whole community in an uproar, and were not the people aroused to to a high pitch of excitement, on account of the plain and fearless manner in which they rebuked, not only principalities and powers, but spiritual wickedness in high places? They appear to have been strangers to the policy of the world, and to the fatal doctrine of expediency. A prejudice was raised against the worthies of that day, no less cruel and vindictive than that which is now indulged by the staunchest friends of slavery towards the Abolitionists. Would it have been right, then, for those who were converted by their preaching, to the principles they professed, to have kept aloof, and said—‘We have no doubt of the correctness of these men’s principles, nor of the honesty of their purpose—but, their *motives*, we see, are not *respected* by the world, and, therefore, we can do more good by not becoming connected with them, and we had better *keep by ourselves*?’ Might I not say, even now, that as prejudice exists to a considerable extent against the Society of Friends, and many will not go to hear a

'*Quaker*' preach, nor read a '*Quaker*' book, therefore, if I would be respected and secure an influence with the world, I must withdraw from the society—then I can do more in spreading their principles? How wouldst thou approve of such an application of the principle of thy objection?

We ought not to *expect* to retain the good esteem and friendship of the wicked, if we are faithful in reproving them for their sins. Our blessed Redeemer said to his disciples—'Wo unto you when all men shall speak *well* of you'—'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.' We must be willing to be of *no reputation*, for—'it is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.'

An influence with wicked men, to be of any service to them, must be found only in the rebuking power of Truth. It is not in any wise to be confounded with personal popularity. The power of Truth may be felt, and the sinner may be awed under its influence; and at the same time he may be constrained by his evil passions to 'gnash with his teeth' upon the person who presents it, like the Jews of old when 'cut to the heart' by the searching rebuke of Stephen. The less there is of that 'influence' which dares not denounce the *wrong* for fear of giving offence to the *wrong-doer*, the better will it be for the cause of Humanity and everlasting Truth.

Perhaps it may be well to consider whether in joining anti-slavery societies, we should not gain the respect and confidence of our colored friends in as great a degree, as we should lose those of the slaveholder; and, whether the esteem of the poor and the oppressed is not as much to be valued as that of their hard hearted oppressors.

Thou sayest, that slaveholders acknowledge that 'Friends' act from *religious motives*, and offerest this as a reason why they should keep *by themselves*. If it be true that they *do* stand so high in the estimation of the South, it is the strongest reason why they should give their unequivocal sanction to the abolition cause. Let us disabuse the public mind of the South, and dispel the delusion that may yet prove fatal to them, which leads them to look abroad for a foe that exists only in their distorted imagination; while a volcano is ready to burst beneath their feet, and to the dangers of which, the very men whom they affect to believe are their enemies, are endeavoring to arouse them.

Thou observest that, in Virginia the appeals of 'Friends' had been listened to with attention and with *effect*, and as an evidence of it referest to the 'Virginia Convention.' This Convention was held in 1829, in which the subject of slavery only came up *incidentally* in a debate on the basis of representation. The subject of emancipation was scarcely mentioned—and slavery was only alluded to and condemned on *political grounds*, as giving undue political power to the slaveholders of Eastern Virginia. Thou probably intended to refer to the Virginia Legislature of 1832, and to the celebrated debate in the House of Delegates; and it is in that debate, no doubt, that thou discoverest a 'tone of feeling so favorable to the cause of abolition.'

I would be the last to lessen the credit justly due to Friends for their labors in the cause of humanity, but I am at a loss to discover any very strong and convincing evidence, of a prevalence of *benevolent feeling* in that legislative body towards the colored population. The discussion of the subject at that time was undoubtedly oc-

casioned by the bloody tragedy of the Southampton insurrection, from the horrors of which many of the members had but just turned their eyes; and on reading the account of the proceedings, we can but perceive that the predominating feelings of most of those who were in favor of *doing something*, were those of fear and alarm, and their primary object, *self-preservation*. L. M. Child, in her 'Appeal &c.' alluding to this event, says,—'In the course of that debate the spirit of slavery showed itself without disguise. The members *talked* of emancipation; but with one or two exceptions, they merely wanted to emancipate or rather to send away, the *surplus* population, which they could neither keep nor sell, and which might prove dangerous. They wished to get rid of the consequences of the evil, but were determined to keep the evil itself. Some members from western Virginia, who spoke in a better spirit, and founded their arguments on the broad principles of justice, not on the mere convenience of a certain class, were repelled with angry excitement. The eastern districts threatened to separate from the western, if the latter persisted in expressing opinions opposed to the continuance of slavery.' Roane was one of those who were in favor of action, but his *benevolent disposition* may be gathered from the following remarks. He says—'I own a considerable number of slaves, and am perfectly sure they are mine; and I am sorry to add that I have occasionally, though not often, been compelled to make *them* feel the *impression* of that ownership. I would not touch a hair on the head of the gentleman's slave, any sooner than I would a hair *in the mane of his horse*.' Gen. Broadnax, another advocate of action, was in favor of *removing the free colored people* and that *by force*. ——— Chandler, also, fully acknowledged the slaves to be *prop-*

erty. The direct action of Friends on this occasion, was by a memorial from the meeting for Sufferings of Virginia Yearly Meeting, praying that some measures might be adopted for the *gradual* abolition of slavery. The discussion occupied several days and resulted in the following conclusions, viz.—1st. That it was not expedient, at that time, to legislate on abolition. 2d. That the colored population of Virginia was a great evil. 3d. That humanity and policy demanded the removal of the free, and of those who might become free. 4th. That this would absorb their present means. 5th. That when public opinion should be more developed, &c. it would be expedient *to commence a system of abolition*. These are what the Richmond Whig called ‘*astonishing and animating results!*’ And with these results, the *pseudo-philanthropists* of Virginia appear to have been contented, and to have settled down into a state of apathy, from which it may require another Southampton tragedy to awaken them. These are the results in relation to which thou sayest—‘This was a good work,—what did hinder it?’ no doubt, having in thy mind’s eye the threadbare objection that, *Abolitionists have put back emancipation in Virginia*, for proof of which, we are frequently referred to the *favorable disposition* manifested in the Virginia Legislature and to the present violent opposition in that State to abolition movements. Kentucky, it is said, was also on the *cue of emancipation*. It may be remembered that the very next year after the famous Virginia discussion, the price of cotton and negroes experienced a rapid rise, increasing up to 1836 :—and it appears that the *abolitionism* of Virginia *declined* in proportion to the increase of the price of human flesh in the man-market! Is not this what ‘*hindered*’ the work?

In regard to Kentucky, I refer thee to the language of John Green, a distinguished lawyer, and a member of the legislature of that State,—an elder in the Presbyterian church, and a SLAVEHOLDER. In a letter to the editor of the Cincinnati Journal, written in 1836, he says: ‘Little is doing for the negro, either in the way of colonization, or voluntary emancipation, or religious instruction, and a general apathy prevails on the subject, not only in the world, but in the church. Many attribute all this to the rampant zeal of the Abolitionists in attempting to force public opinion; and, with apparent self-complacency justify themselves in doing nothing, because they are required to do too much. It cannot be denied that there exists at present, a greater *apparent* opposition to emancipation in any form, than has appeared at any previous period in my recollection. But I am not sure that Abolition has been the *cause*. I would say it has been the *occasion* of *manifesting* that opposition which *previously existed*, but laid dormant for want of an exciting cause. I feel well assured that our slaveholders do not fear that the Abolitionists will excite our slaves to revolt.’

In further reply to this objection, I copy the following pertinent remarks from the Anti-Slavery Record, of 4th month last. ‘If there was at the South any sincere disposition to get rid of slavery, the agitation of the subject could not possibly put it back. A sincere disposition to do justice, strong enough to stand any chance of triumphing over the lust of power and pelf, could not be turned from its purpose by any expression of opinion or sympathy *in favor* of the slave, however imprudent it might be. Who ever heard of a man, penitent enough to make restitution for a life of plunder, being turned back to increased robbery, out of spite at an injudicious re-

prover? The objection is ridiculously absurd, and would not be advanced but in a miserably bad cause. Have the autocrats of history yielded free constitutions to their subjects unasked, in still and slavish times? Have they increased their own prerogatives, and doubled their chains, as they heard the distant murmur of popular agitation? Have they been most mild, and complaisant, and merciful, and most backward to use their extortionary arts, while there was no voice or press to reveal their deeds? Perhaps the objector has an edition of the book of human nature, in which it is written that power is the least abused where it has fewest checks; that tyrants will usurp least when left to themselves; that bad men will commit the fewest crimes when least suspected; and that thieves will steal least, when least watched. As we have read human nature, in the old received edition, it is always a safe thing to put men, who are trusted with power, upon their good behavior, by a full exposure of their derelictions.' I do not believe that a *spark* of genuine philanthropic feeling has been extinguished by the operations of the abolitionists. I believe there is *no force* in the objection, and that if there were at that time, in Virginia or Kentucky, any whose hearts beat in sympathy for the suffering slave, and that there were a few such I have no doubt, they are there still, and we have reason to believe that, as far as they are acquainted with the Abolition movements, their prayers are for their success. The following striking fact is an evidence of this:—'At an anti-slavery concert of prayer for the oppressed, held in New York city, in 1836, a gentleman arose in the course of the meeting, declaring himself a Virginian and a slaveholder. He said he came to that city filled with the deepest prejudice against the Abolitionists, by the reports given of their

character in papers published at the North. But he determined to investigate their character and designs for himself. He even boarded in the family of an Abolitionist, and attended the monthly concert of prayer for the slaves and the slaveholders. And now, as the result of his investigations and observations, he was convinced that *not only the spirit but the principles and measures of the Abolitionists ARE RIGHTEOUS*. He was now ready to emancipate his own slaves, and had commenced advocating the doctrine of immediate emancipation.—“And here,” said he, pointing to two men sitting near him, “are the first fruits of my labors,—these two fellow-Virginians and slaveholders, are converts with myself to Abolitionism. And I know a thousand Virginians who need only to be made acquainted with the true spirit and principles of Abolitionists, in order to their becoming converts as we are. *Let the Abolitionists go on in the dissemination of their doctrines, and let the northern papers cease to misrepresent them at the South,—let the true light of Abolitionism be fully shed upon the southern mind, and the work of immediate and general emancipation will be speedily accomplished.*” *

Does this look as though the Abolitionists were *putting back emancipation*? Such being the facts, it seems to me there need be no difficulty in determining our duty. What, though slaveholders do believe that in the anti-slavery societies, ‘ambition and political influence are the main-springs of action,’ and ‘of course a distrust of these societies is the consequence.’ I hope it is not necessary to adduce evidence to convince *thee* that the charges are utterly false. Northern *pro-slavery* men admit them to be

50. What said Governor Lincoln on the floor of Congress last winter? While he repudiates the views and schemes of the abolitionists, he acknowledges them to be 'pure and philanthropic.' He says, in reference to the Abolition memorials,—'I have presented them from men and women of as pure, elevated and intellectual character as any in the world;—men and women, kind and generous, and of the tenderest sympathies, who would no sooner do an injury or an act of injustice to any human being, than the most chivalrous or true-hearted sons of the South.' * * * * 'Those who sign these petitions are among the most harmless, moral, conscientious people of the land; they would be the last to excite to violence, or willingly do their southern brethren a wrong.' * * * 'Believe me, there is nothing to fear. These thousands of women, these hundreds of Clergymen, the kind-hearted, the sympathetic and the devout who sign these petitions, are not the incendiaries to apply the torch to southern dwellings. May not piety utter its prayer for the relief of human misery? May not female tenderness heave a sigh for the condition of the oppressed, without giving occasion for alarm? This is no scheme of ambition, no plotting of selfish, designing, reckless politicians; it is principally the unsophisticated, the artless, the simple and the unoffending who thus approach you.'—

Knowing these charges to be false, as we do, should we desert the innocent because they are falsely accused? If a man is suspected of committing murder, and we know the accusation to be false and have it in our power to relieve him from the imputation, shall we withhold our assistance, from the fear that we too may be subjected to *suspicion*? We must not forget that we have duties to perform towards those who are engaged in advocating the

cause of the oppressed, and who are thereby exposed to ridicule and reproach, as well as towards the lordly oppressor. Shall we be like the 'chief rulers' of old, who believed on Jesus, 'but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God?' George Fox and William Edmundson were accused of stirring up an insurrection among the negroes, and inciting them to cut their masters' throats. Should *they* have been deserted on that account? Clarkson was stigmatized as an insurrectionist, and charged with wanting to bring all the horrors of the French Revolution into England, because he wanted to abolish the *slave-trade*. Did our Friends in England refuse him their co-operation in consequence of such accusations being directed against him, from a fear that *their influence might be affected*?

But we have abundant evidence that slaveholders themselves who are well informed on this subject, do not believe these charges to be true. And the currency which is given to such malicious accusations, is derived mainly from the misrepresentations of the northern press. Are we, then, doing our duty, while we stand by in silence, suffering our influence to be thrown against the Abolition cause? Apologists of slavery do consider the influence of the society to be cast in the scale against the Abolitionists. I quote the following opinion of Martin Van Buren on this subject, from a letter to a North Carolina committee, dated 'March 6th, 1836.' 'To one class of those who have hitherto petitioned Congress for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, I cannot forbear to refer. I allude to the Society of Friends, or the people usually denominated Quakers. The uniformity of their

course upon this subject, the temperate manner in which it has been manifested, and the marked excellence of their conduct and character, appear to have conciliated respect for their motives, even from those who differ with them in opinion. As far as my observation has enabled me to judge, it is due to them to say, that as there has been no indication of any change of opinion upon their part during the present excitement; so has there been no evidence of a disposition to lend themselves to *the undue agitation of the public mind attempted by others*. There is certainly no class of people in this country, who have a deeper interest in the preservation of the Union and of the happy system of government which it upholds, than they; and it has now become very apparent to all reflecting and observing minds, that *the question of slavery in the District of Columbia cannot be pressed to the result they desire, with safety to these PARAMOUNT objects*. Do not these considerations justify the hope, that from them, at least, we may expect, for the future, a mode of dealing with the subject, which, whilst it does no injustice to their principles, shall *repress* instead of increasing agitation, and not endanger the great interests to which I have referred? To doubt it, would be to distrust the influence which industry, morality, intelligence and republican habits,—qualities which all admit them to possess in a high degree, are calculated, in great emergencies, to exert upon the conduct of their possessors. And for the like reason it may certainly be expected, that well disposed persons of other religious denominations, who, without a full consideration of the difficulties which surround this subject, and of the dangerous consequences to which the efforts of the Abolitionists so evidently tend, have lent to those efforts the influence of their names and character,

will be careful hereafter to avoid the repetition of *an error so unfortunate and mischievous.*'

If any person wishes for further information of Martin Van Buren's views on the abolition of slavery, I would refer them to his Inaugural Address.

A celebrated Greek was at one time told that he had been praised by a bad man. He carefully recollected himself, and then exclaimed—'*What evil thing have I done?*' The application is obvious.

Thou admitest that one great reason for a distrust of the anti-slavery societies, on the part of the slaveholder, is '*love for his own interest and consequent dislike of all that seems to oppose it.*' Very true, undoubtedly. If, then, the Society of Friends has acted as efficiently in this cause as the anti-slavery societies, why has it not consequently come in for its share of distrust, and of the dislike of *all that opposes the interest of the slaveholder?* I will close on this point by proposing a query for consideration—Is *love of interest* a principle of the human mind that we ought to seek to conciliate?

I think I have sufficiently accounted for the different estimation in which the Society of Friends and the anti-slavery societies are held at the South. Before I close this communication, however, some further suggestions may arise, that may tend to place this branch of our inquiry in a still stronger light.

Thou proceedest on the assumption that the Society of Friends is, to all intents and purposes, *an Abolition Society*; and therefore it is unnecessary for its members to connect themselves with any other. While I again explicitly disclaim any desire to undervalue whatever efforts may have been from time to time made by Friends, for the relief of their oppressed and down-trodden fellow coun-

trymen, I feel myself bound to call in question the correctness of this assumption, to the extent to which thou and many other Friends seem disposed to carry it. Our Society was constituted for certain well known purposes. Its founders associated themselves together for the purpose of maintaining certain religious views and principles which, in many respects, distinguished them from the rest of the Christian world. The abolition of slavery was no part of the original objects of their association—on the contrary, its members held slaves for many years afterwards. In process of time, Friends became convinced of the impropriety of holding their fellow-men in bondage, liberated their slaves, and inserted a provision in their discipline, that no member of the Society should thereafter hold any. This act, however it may reflect credit on the Society, does not, in my opinion, give us a just claim to the character of an *Abolition Society*, considering what is implied in that term at the present time. Supposing that a company should be formed for the construction of a rail-road, and after proceeding some time with their work, they see the bad effects of the use of ardent spirit; and, finally, adopt a regulation that no member of the Corporation, and no person in their employ shall be permitted to make use of any. This they scrupulously carry into effect. After a while the public become aroused to the evils of intemperance, and it is proposed to form a Society for the promulgation of temperance principles. They call on the members of the rail-road corporation to join them in the enterprise. But, they say—‘*No—why should ew join a temperance society? Do we not belong to a temperance society already?*’

By an *Abolition Society*, I mean a Society committed to the support of certain fixed principles for effecting the

abolition of slavery. We have already examined the principles and measures of the anti-slavery societies. Now, let us examine the abolition principles and measures of the Society of Friends, and note the difference. If we examine the written Constitution of the Society, we find but little on the subject. In 1773 and 1780, articles were inserted in the discipline of New-England Yearly Meeting, prohibiting its members from holding slaves, but nothing contemplating any especial action for the abolition of slavery out of the pale of the Society. That this was not considered as constituting it an abolition society to that extent, as to preclude its members from joining societies formed for the express purpose of still further extending the blessing of freedom to the oppressed, appears conclusively from the circumstance of many of its most prominent and worthy members being soon after engaged in forming such associations. With these old abolition societies, Friends were for a long period, even almost to the present time, connected; and, on this side of the Atlantic, with Franklin, and Rush, and Jay, and on the other, with Lafayette, and Brissot, and Wilberforce, and Clarkson, they contributed in no small degree to the abolition of the foreign slave trade, and in awakening that humane and generous regard for the rights of man, which has banished slavery itself from the British Islands, and from half the States of this confederacy.

I am not acquainted with the disciplines of the other Yearly Meetings on this subject, but presume there is but little variation. In ours, however, there is an advice, 'That Friends be careful to maintain our testimony faithfully against slavery'—which it is required should be read once a year in our meetings. Has there been, on these occasions, such a manifestation of lively interest in the

concern as might be expected from the members of a Society *laboring 'professedly for the abolition of slavery?'* I believe that, of late years, the idea has been very generally prevalent that, if we kept from holding slaves ourselves, we were 'maintaining our testimony,' and had nothing more to do; forgetting the admonition—'Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor and not suffer sin upon him.' There being so little in the written Constitution of the Society from which to judge of its principles on this subject, we have no other means but to form our conclusions by the course of conduct pursued by its members.

Are they opposed in principle to the Colonization scheme, and, of course, committed in favor of '*emancipation without expatriation?*' If so, their practice is wofully at variance with their principles, for it will not, I presume, be denied that many of them are members of Colonization Societies, and many more are in favor of the project. I am told that a prominent Friend is now, or was recently, *President* of the Pennsylvania Colonization Society. I trust it is unnecessary for me to enter into an argument to show thee the evils of colonizationism. Did I not believe thou wert already aware of them, I would refer thee to treatises in which this subject is discussed by far more able pens than mine. It will be admitted by those acquainted with the prevalent feelings of the colored people, that they are generally strongly opposed to that system, and deprecate it as highly detrimental to their best interests. This was made manifest at a meeting of that class of our citizens, held in Philadelphia, soon after the formation of the American Colonization Society. Notwithstanding this manifestation of feeling, I have never heard it objected against Friends joining that association, that *their influence with the colored people*, to secure whose confidence is

so important if we would benefit them, would be lessened. Why have no apprehensions been indulged, of the consequences of our members joining colonization societies? And why has no *advice* been issued cautioning them against such connection? I believe '*the absence of religion is no disqualification for membership!*' Here may be a grand reason, after all, why the Society of Friends has been so much respected by the slaveholder, aiding, as its members have been, one of their darling schemes for perpetuating slavery! A professed *Abolition Society* and the *American Colonization Society* hand in hand. What an anomaly!

Has the Society of Friends, in its labors in this cause, maintained the position that *the sin must be immediately abandoned*? Has it proclaimed the doctrine of *immediate, unconditional emancipation*? The memorial of Friends of Virginia to the Legislature of that State, in 1832, says—'We submit for your consideration, the propriety of passing an act declaring that *all persons born in the State, after some period to be fixed by law, shall be free*; and that the State of Virginia provide some territory, or solicit the aid of the United States in providing one for the formation of a colony for people of color, and also to aid in removing such free persons as may be disposed to emigrate, and such slaves as may be given up *for that purpose.*' Almost the only tract on slavery, published by Friends, of late years, recommends attempts '*gradually to diminish,*' the evils of slavery—'*to prepare the rising generation of negroes for liberty*' &c. This doctrine of gradually ceasing from sin will not answer. It is powerless. Preach this doctrine to the slaveholder and you administer a *salvo* to his conscience that renders your preaching ineffectual. Admit that *under existing circum-*

stances, he may be excusable in sinning *to-day*; why not to-morrow?—or next week?—or next year? If *existing circumstances* will warrant it now, depend upon it, *existing circumstances will never be wanting*. With the slaveholder it is *always to-day*.—To-morrow never comes. That a contrariety of sentiment exists in the Society on this point is undeniable.

The Anti-Slavery Society has waged an exterminating warfare against that malignant spirit which is crushing the colored man to the earth, and preventing his moral elevation, viz:—*Prejudice against color*. That this cruel prejudice exists to some extent among the members of that Society, which has long professed to be, above all others, the colored man's friend, evidence is not wanting. It will be allowed that the '*Negro Pew*,' or its equivalent, may be found in in some of our meeting-houses, where men and women, brothers and sisters by creation, and heirs of the same glorious immortality, are seated by themselves on a back bench for no other reason but because it has pleased their Creator to give them a *complexion* darker than our own! I believe that an awful accountability rests on us for the *repulsive* effect of our conduct on our colored brethren and sisters, by which, tender, seeking spirits among them have been deeply wounded. I have in my possession some affecting accounts, exhibiting the effect of this sinful prejudice on the susceptible minds of those who have been brought under its influence. I have been grieved that occasion should have been given for remarks which have appeared in the public prints, exposing the inconsistency of our practice with our profession in this particular, and necessarily subjecting our beloved Society to the reproach of the world. Instances would not be wanting, were it necessary to pro-

duce evidence of the prevalence of this unchristian feeling—but I forbear. Such exhibitions are painful and humiliating. It is a rare occurrence for a colored person to be a member of the Society of Friends. May not facts, like the above mentioned, account for this?

With these facts before us, it must be conceded that this Society, 'which has labored professedly to abolish slavery,' is in this respect, composed of very discordant materials—having no fixed principles of action in relation to this subject. We find among its members, *immediatists and gradualists, advocates of unconditional emancipation and colonizationists*. Notwithstanding they may all be opposed to slavery *in the abstract*, there is a want of unity of sentiment and harmony of purpose, without which, the action of the Society, as an abolition society, must necessarily be inefficient;—and such being the case, I cannot admit that it has a just claim to the name.

But it may be said, that it is the duty of Friends to endeavor to produce a unity of sentiment and action among themselves. That is what we want. And the only way to produce this desirable result is by a free and open *discussion* of this subject. We ask for discussion. But we are told,—No, it is an *exciting* question, and it will not do to discuss it—we must wait until we can see alike! How long should we have to wait, unless there can be an interchange of sentiment in relation to it?

Should, however, this desirable result be produced—should the Society adopt to their full extent the principles of the Abolitionists,—although it might do much by laboring in its appropriate sphere, and giving its influence unequivocally in support of those principles; it is not so constituted as to carry out efficiently that system of measures, by which those principles are to be brought to bear

with the greatest effect on the public mind. This appears to have been well understood by our Friends in England, when the Yearly Meeting of London recommended its members, '*individually to co-operate with others*' in this cause; and when it directed subscriptions to be received throughout its subordinate meetings, in consequence of which about 50,000 dollars were raised, *and a large proportion of it given to the British Anti-Slavery Society.* To the American Anti-Slavery Society, *we* must look as the most efficient agent for conducting our operations in this cause, and this Society, I believe, may justly claim our co-operation, whatever course the Society of Friends may pursue.

An efficient system of operations, adequate to the importance of the cause, and the magnitude of the object to be accomplished, requires the *concentrated* efforts of all the friends of emancipation. To act efficiently we must act harmoniously and simultaneously.

Is it practicable, for the Society of Friends, as now constituted, to adopt an efficient course, by itself? Would its members not need all the information, in order to act understandingly, which the American Anti-Slavery Society is at so much pains to procure, and to send forth to the world, through its agents and lecturers, and by means of its innumerable publications? And are we going to avail ourselves of the advantages to be derived from their arduous labors, and keep by ourselves and not contribute to the common cause in which they have suffered so much, while we have been enjoying the smiles of public favor? Or, is it practicable for us to send out agents through the land to disseminate knowledge on this subject—or, if practicable, is there the least probability that such a course would be pursued? Shall we establish presses throughout

the country, and send forth our newspapers, and tracts, and pamphlets, spreading anti-slavery principles broadcast over the land? If such a system of measures were to be introduced, our Yearly, our Quarterly, our Monthly, and our Preparative Meetings, would be converted into Anti-Slavery Meetings, and still, time would be wanting for the needful discussions, and consultations, and arrangements. So that there would be an indispensable necessity for some new organization. But no one will entertain the idea that any thing of this kind will take place, and until it does, I believe that, in order to 'maintain our testimony faithfully against slavery,' we have duties to perform without the limits of the religious Society to which we belong.

Moral Reform Societies must take the lead in these moral reformations. How is it in regard to the Temperance reformation? We see the Temperance Societies, with *total abstinence* inscribed on their banners, leading the way far in advance, while *we* are halting behind. Our Society as a body, is not yet prepared to adopt the high temperance principle.

Another objection is, that *Friends are known to be a religious body, and 'opposed to all violence;'* and 'to act up to their creed that the end does *not* sanctify the means.' Any one acquainted with the views of the Abolitionists must be aware that the latter is one of their most prominent doctrines—one which is so plainly inscribed on the very portals of their doors, that he 'who runs may read.' The anti-slavery societies are fully committed in support of *peaceable measures alone*. Thou wilt find it to be the case in the Constitution of every anti-slavery society in the country. The pacific intentions of the Abolitionists are acknowledged by southerners themselves. They fear not *physical violence*; but the moral force of FREE DIS-

CUSSION is what they so much dread. What said John C. Calhoun in Congress in 1835 ?—‘ Do they expect the Abolitionists will resort to arms, and commence a crusade to liberate our slaves by force ? Is this what they mean when they speak of the attempt to abolish slavery ? If so, let me tell our friends of the South who differ from us, that the war which the Abolitionists wage against us, is of a very different character, AND FAR MORE EFFECTIVE ; it is waged *not* against our *lives*, but our *character*.’ If there be any who entertain fears of the *means* that will be resorted to, let Friends, by their co-operation, undeceive them, and assure them that their fears are groundless.

It is next objected that ‘ *the absence of religion is no disqualification for membership* ’ in the anti-slavery societies. I think much need not be said on this point. If any person ‘ consents to the principles ’ of the Anti-Slavery Society as stated in its Constitution, I should not have much hesitation in accepting of his assistance. The object of our association is well understood, and I do not thereby become accountable for his sentiments on other subjects.

This subject is treated with great clearness and perspicuity by Joseph John Gurney, in an article on ‘ Christian, Philanthropic, and Social Fellowship,’ published in the Friend, vol. 6, No. 2, and the distinction between *religious societies*, and those for *benevolent or other purposes*, very satisfactorily shown. He takes the ground that any one of the denominations of the Christian church is religious *by constitution*, and that *in that character*, a union cannot be properly maintained with any, who deny their doctrines, or with persons of immoral character, because that if we allowed *religious fellowship* with such an individual, we should sanction his errors, and support them by the authority of the respective churches to which we be-

long. But, he says, that those who refuse to maintain church union with such as differ from them, do freely allow them to become, with themselves, members of ‘a society which, although religious as to its *object*, is not so as to its *constitution*, and which no more partakes of the nature of a church, than any partnership whatsoever formed among men, for civil or benevolent purposes.’ He alludes to the Bible Society in illustration of his views, but his remarks are equally applicable to other benevolent associations. He says further—‘The principle which binds him [the Christian] to the support of the Bible Society in particular, is one of clear scriptural authority, of immense practical importance, and strong enough to overcome a thousand ill-founded prejudices, and scruples; namely that it is always our duty, under every possible circumstance, and by all lawful means in our power, to promote the happiness of our fellow-men, and the glory of God our Savior.’ After comparing the grounds on which a serious Christian stands, in connexion with other men, while he prosecutes his various objects in life, to the successive stories of a pyramid, he remarks—‘Now, I contend, that in the whole of this process, the Christian (barring the weakness and sin to which we all are liable) is clearly devoid of blame. He eschews the evil, whosoever may separate from him; he chooses the good, whosoever may unite with him. With a steady consistency, he pursues his own path of duty, and keeps a conscience void of offence in the sight of God and man. The Christian ought ever to fix his attention on principles, rather than on persons. While he cleaves to the immutable rule of right in his own conduct—abstaining from all that is evil, and doing all that is good—the question of his connection with other men, will mostly find its own right level. The pur-

suit of an unbending line of duty, will separate him from the world, just in the manner, and just in the degree, which true Christianity requires—which God, in his perfect wisdom, has seen meet to ordain.’

I refer thee to the article itself, which was accompanied with a commendatory notice by the Editor of the Friend, and which I think fully refutes the objection.

I think the article alluded to very fully meets the objection so frequently made, that by joining with others in their associations, we are compromising our testimony to the spirituality of divine worship, and to a *free* gospel ministry. At these meetings, every one knows the purposes for which we assemble, that it is not for the purpose of performing divine worship—and I do not see how our testimony in that respect is involved any more than in associating with our fellow-citizens for establishing a hospital or for any other benevolent enterprise.

And how it comes in collision with our views of the ministry I cannot conceive, any more than in hiring a lawyer to argue a cause, or a school-master to teach our children.

The cause of the slave is now on trial before the people of this country, and it is right that we should pay the counsel engaged in his behalf. Grown-up children need to be taught the A, B, C, of Abolitionism, and justice demands that their teachers should be compensated.

I am aware that the formal manner in which prayers are sometimes introduced at the opening of anti-slavery meetings is inconsistent with the views of ‘Friends.’ But many of these meetings are managed by ‘Friends’ in their own way,—and in some, their feelings and wishes are so far regarded as to induce members of other religious denominations, to omit their customary exercises. Where

it has been otherwise, and the few Friends present have not felt it to be their duty to object to the course of their Christian friends and neighbors, in opening the meetings in their customary manner, it has been distinctly understood that they were not to be considered as participating, or in any way implicated in those exercises which are not in accordance with their views of religious duty. I do not think the objection has sufficient weight to prevent us from co-operating in the praiseworthy object for which we are associated. Our mere presence cannot, surely, be considered as making us accountable for exercises in which we decline participating.—For how, then, could Friends attend the funerals of other people?—And how can our friend, D. Wheeler, be excusable while attending the missionary meetings in the Islands of the Pacific?

It is no new thing for Friends to be connected with associations for various benevolent purposes. Friends of unimpeachable consistency of character, have been so connected—I have been for years attached to such societies, against which the same objections might, with equal propriety, be brought,—but, I scarcely ever heard a lisp of disapprobation. Why has all this opposition to such proceedings been reserved to be directed against those engaged in the anti-slavery cause? It is a well-known fact that some of those who are most warmly opposed to our course, are themselves actively engaged in associations similarly constituted. To such as these, the charge of *inconsistency*, I think, may apply.

Thou sayest in reference to the Society of Friends,—‘Our weapons are *not* carnal.’ The weapons on which the Abolitionists rely are TRUTH AND LOVE. Are *they* carnal? These are weapons of mighty efficacy, and with them, trusting in Him who has declared that, for the op-

pression of the poor and the sighing of the needy He will arise, we will go forth to the conflict, nothing daunted,—‘Though a host should encamp against us, our hearts shall not fear.’

I notice thy remark that the only way in which we can act *availingly*, is ‘*on the reason and conscience of the oppressor.*’ This has ever been the aim of the Abolitionists, and they are encouraged in believing that they have been to a great extent effectual. James Smylie, a Presbyterian minister in Mississippi, in a work recently published by him says,—‘From his intercourse with religious societies of *all* denominations in Mississippi and Louisiana, he was aware that the Abolition maxim, viz.: that *slavery is in itself sinful, had gained on and entwined itself among the religious and conscientious scruples of many* in the community, so far as to render them *unhappy*. The eye of the mind, resting on slavery itself as a *corrupt fountain*, from which, of necessity, *nothing but corrupt* streams could flow, was *incessantly* employed in search of some plan by which, with safety, the fountain could, in some future time, be *entirely* dried up.’ A further acknowledgement of the effect of Abolition efforts will be found in the following extract from the Herald of Freedom : ‘A young gentleman who has been residing in South Carolina, says, our movements (Abolitionist’s) are producing the best effects upon the South, *rousing the consciences of slaveholders*, while the slaves seem to be impressed as a body with the idea, that help is coming—that an interest is felt for them, and plans devising for their relief somewhere—which keeps them quiet. He says it is not uncommon for ministers and good people to make confession like this. One, riding with him, broke forth, “O, I fear that the groans and wails from our slaves enter

into the ear of the Lord of Sabaoth. I am distressed on this subject ; my conscience will let me have no peace. I go to bed, but not to sleep. I walk my room in agony, and resolve that I will never hold slaves another day ; but in the morning, my heart, like Pharaoh's, is hardened." "

And there are others who have liberated their slaves to the number of five or six hundred. Others, again, who are weeping in secret places, over the abominations of slavery, and praying for the success of our efforts. These things we have learned from southern lips, and southern pens. Let them stimulate us to unremitted effort to 'deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest the fury of the Lord go out like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of our doings, "as a nation." ' For further evidence we can point to our James G. Birney, and our James A. Thome, who, having been converted, and having emancipated their own slaves, are now zealously engaged in converting their southern brethren, and in *confirming* northern Abolitionists. We might point to the instance where one of our *six-cent tracts* has done wonders. But enough has been said to show, not only that *our object* is to act upon the *consciences* of the slaveholder, but to prove most conclusively that we *have had access* to them.

'*Right consequences follow right actions,*' is an excellent maxim. It is one of the first principles of Abolitionists, and one to which they love to recur. But, it seems to me, that thou appliest it *wrong end foremost*, for thou proceedest to consider what the probable consequences will be, in order to determine the actions. Therefore, it is not so much to be wondered at that thou hast come to a wrong conclusion in relation to *thy* duty in this matter. I choose to reverse the application ; and in so doing, I

come to a different conclusion. Let us keep this maxim in view, resting assured of its truth, and only seek to be governed by the immutable principles of truth and righteousness. It is not for man to foresee the consequences of his conduct. ‘DUTY IS OURS, EVENTS ARE GOD’S.’

I, some time since, considered it my duty to join an anti-slavery society;—I believe it to be right to *continue* my connection with it; because, in so doing, I believe I am openly acknowledging *right principles*,—and because, I believe the *measures* of the Abolitionists are the *only ones* that can peacefully effect the abolition of slavery. I think those who object to this course are bound to prescribe a *better one*.

What would be our course, were we now the pioneers in this righteous cause? Should we not seek the aid of others, and hail with joy the prospect of additional assistance? Or should we refuse all connection with them, and virtually say to them, ‘Stand by thyself.—I am holier than thou?’ Should we expect, single-handed, to carry on the great work to its consummation? Or, should we, more rationally, acknowledge the necessity of concentrated action?

Let us not circumscribe our sphere of action improperly, by considering *merely* what are our duties as members of the Society of Friends; but let us also consider what is required of us *as members of the human family*.

Although I have spoken my sentiments freely, I hope it will not be thought that it is with any unkind feelings towards the Society or its members; I have thought that the occasion demanded plainness of speech, and I have endeavored faithfully to ‘*speak the truth in love*.’ I dearly love the Society of Friends,—I feel bound to it by ties which could not be broken without keen sensibility of

feeling. Still stronger do I feel attached to its principles and testimonies, and my earnest solicitude is, that I may be enabled to maintain them in all faithfulness and godly sincerity. The indifference manifested, in relation to that *one* which I have recently found it my place in an especial manner to advocate, is deeply painful to me; and I am grieved to witness the uncharitable feelings which have so much prevailed towards those who, like myself, have publicly espoused the cause of the poor slave. It would greatly rejoice my heart to see 'Friends' taking a noble stand in this cause after the example of our worthy English brethren, who have shown themselves so unequivocally on the side of the oppressed. I have just received an extract from the London Christian Advocate, of 6th mo., 5th, by which it appears that on the 29th of 5th month, being the third day of the sitting of the Yearly Meeting, the evening was occupied by friends in attendance, in hearing a statement from JOSEPH STURGE, of Birmingham, relative to his recent visit to the West Indies. The large meeting-house was filled to overflowing. The meeting was opened with remarks by Samuel Gurney, after which Joseph Sturge spoke for two hours. He commenced by saying that he '*deeply regretted that the ardor of Friends in America was greatly abated on the subject of slavery.*' At the close he spoke as follows: 'He did not like to sit down without expressing the feelings of pain which had resulted from what he had witnessed during a brief visit he had paid to the Continent of America, and especially from the fact that not a single member of the Society of Friends there was on the Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society. The Friends of Philadelphia had actually issued a document advising their members not to join the anti-slavery societies, and in which they attempted

to cast a stigma upon others, and spoke of the anti-slavery tracts as incendiary publications. This spirit and practice was surely opposed to the views and writings of Geo. Fox, of William Penn, of John Woolman, and others of our noble-minded predecessors." Samuel Gurney and other Friends spoke, and Samuel Cox prayed for the oppressed and for the oppressor.*

While it is humiliating to witness the position in which our Society in this country is thus placed in the view of the philanthropists of England, it is truly refreshing to observe the unabated interest of our English 'Friends' in the righteous cause.

If I know my own heart, I have no wish, in presenting these considerations to thy notice, but to contribute to the advancement of the cause of *truth*. Should it be the means of inducing any to give their aid to the great work of EMANCIPATION, to Him be the praise, to whom that work belongs.

Affectionately, thy friend,

WM. BASSETT.

Lynn, 9th mo. 2d, 1837.

* I have frequently heard it remarked, that our 'Friends' in England having seen the bad effects of their connection with the anti-slavery cause, have REPENTED of the course they have taken. I have never been favored with any evidence in support of this assertion, but, on the contrary, in addition to the above, it appears that ANTHONY WIGHAM, an influential Friend and minister, officiated as chairman at the recent anti-slavery meeting at Aberdeen,—also, that in one of the sittings of the late Yearly Meeting in London, notice was given by one of the clerks, that a subscription paper was in William Manley's office, for the general purposes of the Anti-Slavery Society. A great anti-slavery meeting has lately been held at Exeter Hall, London, at which the Duke of Sussex presided, when JOSEPH STURGE addressed the meeting. Our worthy friend WILLIAM ALLEN was also present, and moved a vote of thanks to the chairman, and was otherwise active on the occasion. Such accounts are truly gratifying and encouraging.